



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Eastern District of Virginia*

Paul J. McNulty
United States Attorney

2100 Jamieson Avenue (703)
299-3700
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

News Release

For Immediate Release
For further Information contact:
Sam Dibbley at 703-842-4050
Alexandria, Virginia
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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Joseph E. Williams, 46, was found guilty by a jury today of two federal firearm charges for which he could be sentenced to up to life in prison.

On March 21, 2003, the body of Gail Collins was found in her apartment in the City of Alexandria. The criminal investigation indicated Ms. Collins was shot to death on March 11 or 12, 2003. The investigation further showed that Ms. Collins' bank card was in the defendant's possession on March 12, 2003. Ms. Collins was employed by the United States Department of the Treasury. The defendant lived in the same apartment building as the victim. After Ms. Collins was killed, her bank card was used to withdraw \$580.00 from her bank accounts.

The defendant was found guilty of being in possession of a firearm after being convicted of a felony and being in possession of a firearm while an unlawful user of a controlled substance, crack cocaine. The murder was not prosecuted in United States District Court because of a lack of federal jurisdiction over this charge. However, the jury was presented with a special verdict form in which they were asked to make certain findings, and they found that Williams committed first degree murder when he killed Gail Collins.

Williams will be sentenced by the Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema on December 17, 2004.

The case was investigated by the Alexandria Police Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the United States Attorney's Office. Assistant United States Attorneys Patrick F. Stokes and Erik R. Barnett prosecuted the case.